CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.　　A method for enabling at least one internal business process that uses a
first data representation and that includes at least one activity that involves a
trading partner to communicate with the trading partner through an interaction
standard comprising the steps of:

　　　　a) receiving a message having the first data representation from the
internal business process; and

　　　　b) automatically converting the message having the first data
representation into a corresponding message having the communication format
specified by the interaction standard.

2.　　The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

　　　　c) receiving a message in the communication format from the trading
partner; and

　　　　d) automatically converting the received message having the
communication format specified by the interaction standard into a
corresponding message having the first data representation.

3.　　The method of claim 1 wherein the interaction standard is one of a
peer-to-peer (P2P) standard and a business-to-business (B2B) standard.

4.　　The method of claim 2 wherein the interaction standard is one of
RosettaNet and the Common Business Library (CBL).

5.　　The method of claim 1 wherein the internal business process includes at
least one workflow.

6.   The method of claim 1 wherein the step of automatically converting the message having the first data representation into a corresponding message having the communication format specified by the interaction standard

5   retrieving a service definition;

retrieving a mark-up language document template; and

preparing a mark-up language message that is based on the mark-up language document template.

10   7.   The method of claim 2 wherein the step of automatically converting the received message having the communication format specified by the interaction standard into a corresponding message having the first data representation includes

retrieving at least one XQL query; and

15   executing the XQL query to extract the data from the reply.

8.   A system comprising:

a) an internal business process that includes a first data representation;

b) an interaction standard for specifying a communication format for

20   communication between the internal business process and at least one trading partner; and

c) a trading partner conversation manager for managing conversation between the internal business process and the trading partner.

25   9.   The system of claim 8 wherein the trading partner conversation manager automatically converts messages having the first data representation into corresponding messages having the communication format specified by the interaction standard.

10.   The system of claim 8 wherein the trading partner conversation manager automatically converts messages having the communication format specified by the interaction standard into corresponding messages having the first data representation.

11.   The system of claim 8 wherein the trading partner conversation manager automatically maps a first message with the first data representation into a corresponding first message in the communication format, and automatically maps a second message in the communication format into a corresponding second message in the first data representation.

12.   The system of claim 8 wherein the interaction standard is one of a peer-to-peer (P2P) standard and a business-to-business (B2B) standard.

13.   The system of claim 8 wherein the interaction standard is one of RosettaNet and the Common Business Library (CBL).

14.   The system of claim 8 wherein the internal business process includes at least one workflow.

15.   A method for managing conversation between a first enterprise and a second enterprise in comprising the steps of:

        a) determining whether communication with an external trading partner is needed;

        when communication with an external trading partner is needed performing the following:

        b) determining whether the communication is inbound or outbound;

c) when the communication is inbound, performing inbound communication processing; and

d) when the communication is outbound, performing outbound communication processing.

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16. The method of claim 15 wherein the step of determining whether communication with an external trading partner is needed includes the step of

polling a workflow server.

10 17. The method of claim 15 wherein the step of determining whether the communication is inbound or outbound includes the step of

determining whether a service type is a send message or a receive message.

18. The method of claim 15 wherein the step of performing inbound communication

15 processing includes the steps of

retrieving a service name and XQL queries;

parsing the request and extracting data;

starting the service and passing data;

obtaining service results;

20   retrieving an XML template;

preparing an XML response;

sending the XML message; and

returning control to the workflow server.

25 19. The method of claim 15 wherein the step of performing outbound communication processing includes the steps of

retrieving a service definition;

retrieving an XML template;

preparing an XML response; and

sending the XML message.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the step of performing outbound communication processing further includes the steps of

determining if a response is expected;

when a response is not expected, returning control to the workflow server;

when a response is expected, waiting for the response, retrieving service name and XQL queries, parsing the response and extracting data, and returning control to the workflow server.